



Georgia Department of Community Health

Political Activity	Policy No. 416
Effective Date: July 31, 2000	Page <u>1</u> of <u>5</u>

- References:**
1. 5 U.S.C. §1501-1508, Hatch Political Activities Act
 2. O.C.G.A. §45-10-70
 3. Rules of the State Personnel Board, Rule 3

I. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to identify the allowances, prohibitions and requirements for approval of political activity.

II. Scope

This policy applies to all employees of the Department of Community Health (DCH) and attached agencies.

III. Policy

- A. Employees of DCH are protected from undue political pressure, influence or coercion by federal and state laws, as well as departmental policy. The same laws and policy limit political activity while assuring that the right to participate in the political process is preserved.

B. Authorized Political Activity

DCH employees **may** do the following:

1. Register and vote in any election.
2. Promote and encourage other persons to exercise their right to vote.
3. Express a personal opinion privately and publicly on political candidates and issues, provided that any public expression does not conflict with any laws or policy and is not under color of office or position.
4. Display a political picture, badge or button as long as such display is not under color of office or position or while on duty or on state property.
5. Display a political bumper sticker on a privately owned vehicle upon which the state is not paying transportation mileage.



6. Offer for and hold any elective or appointive office of a political subdivision of the state, political party, or political organization provided the office is not full-time, does not conflict with the performance of the employees' official duties, and is not otherwise prohibited by law.
7. Participate in the non-partisan activities of a civic, community, social, professional, employee or similar organization.
8. Be a member of a political party or other political organization and participate in its activities to the extent permitted by federal and state laws and/or policy.
9. Attend partisan and non-partisan political meetings and rallies as a **spectator**.
10. Sign a petition for specific legislative action or to place a candidate's name on an election ballot.
11. Be active in connection with such questions as constitutional amendments, referenda, approval of municipal ordinances or other questions or issues of a similar character.
12. Serve as a **non-partisan** paid worker at the polls in an election.
13. Participate fully in public affairs in a manner which does not materially compromise their efficiency or integrity as employees, or the neutrality, efficiency or integrity of the Department. Such participation, subject to the language of this section and all applicable state and federal laws, may include direct monetary contributions to a political candidate or campaign from the employee's personal funds.
14. Write a personal letter to a newspaper or other publication expressing a personal view on public issues.
15. Contribute to a governmental program for financing federal, state or local elections as permitted by federal or state laws.
16. Direct, manage, control, participate in, contribute to and accept contributions for their own campaigns for any office permitted by laws and policy.

C. **Prohibited Political Activity**

DCH employees are **not** allowed to do the following:

1. Be a candidate for nomination, election or appointment to any:



- a. **full-time** elective public office of a political subdivision of this state or any other state;
 - b. **full-time** elective office of a political party or political organization;
 - c. elective state office of this state or any other state; or
 - d. elective civil office of the Federal government.
2. Direct, manage, control or participate in a political campaign except for their own campaign or as otherwise permitted by laws and policy.
 3. Serve as a watcher, challenger or similar partisan worker at the polls in any election.
 4. Seek, use or attempt to use, any coercive political pressure to secure for themselves or any other person an appointment, promotion, increase in pay or any other advantage in employment in a position in the Department.
 5. Use or promote to use, directly or indirectly, any official authority or influence, whether possessed or anticipated, to influence the political action of any other person or to affect the results of a nomination, campaign or election to any public office, political party office, or an office of a political organization.
 6. Pay or promise to pay any assessment, subscription or contribution for any political organization or purpose, or solicit or take any part in soliciting any such assessment, subscription or contribution except as permitted by laws and policy.
 7. Directly or indirectly coerce, attempt to coerce, command or advise any Department employee to pay, lend or otherwise contribute anything of value to any person, party, committee, organization or agency for political purposes.
 8. Participate in any form of political activity while on duty or under color of office or position.
 9. Engage in any political activity in violation of federal or state laws.
 10. Personally and knowingly endorse candidates other than themselves or oppose candidates other than their opponents in elections for public office or political party office in a political advertisement, broadcast, campaign literature, or similar means of mass communication.



11. Address a convention, caucus, rally, or similar gathering in support of candidates other than themselves or in opposition to candidates other than their opponents for public office or political party office.
12. Circulate a recall petition.
13. Transport any political campaign literature or matter, or engage in soliciting votes in any election or primary while traveling in a vehicle upon which the State is paying transportation mileage.

D. Federal Hatch Political Activities Act

DCH employees whose principal employment is in connection with an activity which is financed in whole or in part by loans or grants made by the United States or a federal agency are covered by the Federal Hatch Political Activities Act. As a matter of federal law, such employees are **not** allowed to:

1. Use official authority or influence for the purpose of interfering with or affecting the result of an election or nomination for office.
2. Directly or indirectly coerce, attempt to coerce, command or advise a state or local officer or employee to pay, lend or contribute anything of value to a party, committee, organization, agency or person for political purposes.
3. Be a candidate for public elective office in a partisan election (which may include some part-time offices of local subdivisions of the State).

- E. Employees are personally responsible for understanding the limitations of political activity and for determining if they are eligible for appointment or election to a public office, political party office or an office of a political organization. Employees who violate this policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination from employment.

IV. Procedures

- A. Employees must complete the *REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF POLITICAL ACTIVITY* Form (See Attachment #1) and submit it through the appropriate lines of authority to the Office of Human Resources to request a review and approval of potential political activity.
- B. The request form will be reviewed by the Director, Office of Human Resources or authorized designee and will be approved or denied. If denied, a reason for denial will be included on the request form.



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- C. The original request form will be maintained in the Office of Human Resources and a copy will be returned to the employee and the section or unit manager.

ATTACHMENT:

1. Request For Approval of Political Activity

Approved By:

Date:

7-31-00

Department of Community Health

REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF POLITICAL ACTIVITY

TO BE COMPLETED BY EMPLOYEE

Name of Employee _____ Date: _____

Job Title _____ Organizational Unit _____

PLEASE COMPLETE IF SEEKING POLITICAL POSITION

Position sought _____

Description of duties of political position _____

When will the election or appointment take place? _____

What is the term of office? _____

Would political appointment/election be **full-time** or **part-time**? ☐ full-time ☐ part-timeIs election considered **partisan** or **non-partisan**? ☐ partisan ☐ non-partisan

Will there be any possible interference with the DCH job? _____

If yes, please explain _____

**PLEASE COMPLETE IF REQUESTING PERMISSION TO PARTICIPATE
IN OTHER POLITICAL ACTIVITIES**

Name of Organization, Political Group, Committee, etc. _____

Description of political activity or involvement _____

Are you seeking a position as an officer? ☐ yes ☐ no

If yes, please indicate official title and duties _____

Are you requesting permission to be a delegate to a political convention? ☐ yes ☐ no

If yes, describe potential duties _____

Will there be any possible interference with the DCH job? ☐ yes ☐ no

If yes, please explain _____

Department of Community Health

REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF POLITICAL ACTIVITY

I understand that as an employee of the Department of Community Health, I am not allowed to participate in any form of political activity that is in violation of federal or state laws or DCH policy. I have reviewed DCH Policy No. 416, Political Activity.

To my knowledge, the above stated information is an accurate disclosure of facts regarding my political activities.

Date_____
Employee's Signature**TO BE COMPLETED BY THE SUPERVISOR**

Is the requesting employee's principal employment connected with an activity which is financed in whole or part by loans or grants from the federal government? ☐ yes ☐ no

Would the political appointment or other political activity create a conflict with current position duties or give the appearance of a conflict of interest? ☐ yes ☐ no

If yes, please explain _____

Have you verified the information provided by the employee and found it to be accurate?

☐ yes☐ no

If no, please state discrepancies _____

Recommendation: ☐ *Approve* ☐ *Deny Approval*

Date_____
Supervisor's Signature**TO BE COMPLETED BY OFFICE OF HUMAN RESOURCES**

Request is ☐ *Approved* ☐ *Denied*

If denied, reason(s) for denial _____

Date_____
Human Resources Director's Signature